

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Original) Computer system for managing composite documents in multi-user mode, including:
  - a document data processing tool,
  - a document data display manager,
  - a document user rights manager, characterized in that:
  - the processing tool includes:
    - \* an object model, including a plurality of classes, structured to include a content pointer, a level indicator, an access method, a validation method, and a validation indicator,
    - \* a document operator capable of creating and maintaining a document in the form of a set of object model class instances,
  - the display manager being arranged to enable the joint display of a tree diagram, defined according to level indicators and display/input zones with tabs, corresponding to the contents of class instances existing in at least part of the tree diagram,
  - the processing tool only authorizing access to a document according to the access rights of the user concerned, such as determined by the document user rights manager,
  - in the event of access, the processing tool only authorizing validation of a zone according to the validation rights of the user concerned for the document, as determined by the document user rights manager,
  - the display manager additionally including a first mechanism capable of jointly modifying the display of a zone and a corresponding node in the tree diagram according to the validation status of the zone, and a second mechanism capable, judging by the level indicators, of causing a validated status to rise to a higher level node when all of the nodes of one level are validated,
  - whereas, when the head of the tree diagram is validated, the processing tool authorizes the signature of the entire document by a user having corresponding signature rights.

2. (Original) Computer system according to Claim 1, characterized in that the tree diagram includes levels arranged in a descending hierarchy, in particular levels such as document, chapter and section, each level comprising one or more nodes.
3. (Currently amended) Computer system according to ~~one of Claims 1 and 2~~ Claim 1, characterized in that a tabbed display/input zone corresponds to a node at a level.
4. (Currently amended) Computer system according to ~~one of Claims 1 to 3~~ Claim 1, characterized in that the document user rights manager determines the user rights for a given document based on the instantiation of a method of reading the rights of that user.
5. (Currently amended) Computer system according to ~~one of Claims 1 to 4~~ Claim 1, characterized in that the user rights for a document include at least some of the following rights: the right to display, print, search, preview, create, duplicate, link, delete, export, write, validate, discuss, publish, enter, and sign a document.
6. (Currently amended) Computer system according to ~~one of Claims 1 to 5~~ Claim 1, characterized in that the document user rights manager determines the user role data for a given document based on the instantiation of a method of reading the role of that user, the role data being defined by a set of rights.
7. (Currently amended) Computer system according to ~~one of Claims 1 to 6~~ Claim 1, characterized in that the user role data for a document includes at least some of the roles such as:
  - reader, defining at least the rights to display, print, search, preview, and export a document for a user,
  - author, defining at least the rights to create, duplicate, delete, and revise a document for a user,
  - editor, defining at least the rights to write, validate, and discuss a document for a user,
  - publisher, defining at least the right to publish a document for a user,
  - contributor, defining at least the rights to validate and discuss a document for a user,
  - signatory, defining at least the right to sign a document for a user.
8. (Currently amended) Computer system according to ~~one of Claims 1 to 7~~ Claim 1, characterized in that:

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- the first mechanism is capable of changing the node color according to the validation status of the corresponding zone,
- the second mechanism is capable, when the color of all the nodes at a level indicates that they are validated, of changing the node color of the higher level to indicate validation thereof.

9. (Currently amended) Computer system according to ~~one of Claims 1 to 8~~ Claim 1, characterized in that the document user rights manager is designed to manage rights defined for a group of documents and/or for a set of users.

10. (Currently amended) Computer system according to ~~one of Claims 1 to 9~~ Claim 1, characterized in that the display manager includes a third mechanism capable, based on the validation of a higher node, of propagating the node validation to lower levels.